



# Police Behavior during Traffic and Street Stops, 2011

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In 2011, over 62.9 million U.S. residents age 16 or older, or 26% of the population, had one or more contacts with police during the prior 12 months (figure 1). For about half (49%) of persons experiencing contact with police, the most recent contact was involuntary or police-initiated. In 2011, 86% of persons involved in traffic stops during their most recent contact with police and 66% of persons involved in street stops (i.e., stopped in public but not in a moving vehicle) believed that the police both behaved properly and treated them with respect during the contact. A greater percentage of persons involved in street stops (25%) than those pulled over in traffic stops (10%) believed the police had not behaved properly. Regardless of the reason for the stop, less than 5% of persons who believed the police had not behaved properly filed a complaint.

The data in this report were drawn from the Bureau of Justice Statistics' (BJS) 2011 Police-Public Contact Survey (PPCS), a supplement to the National Crime

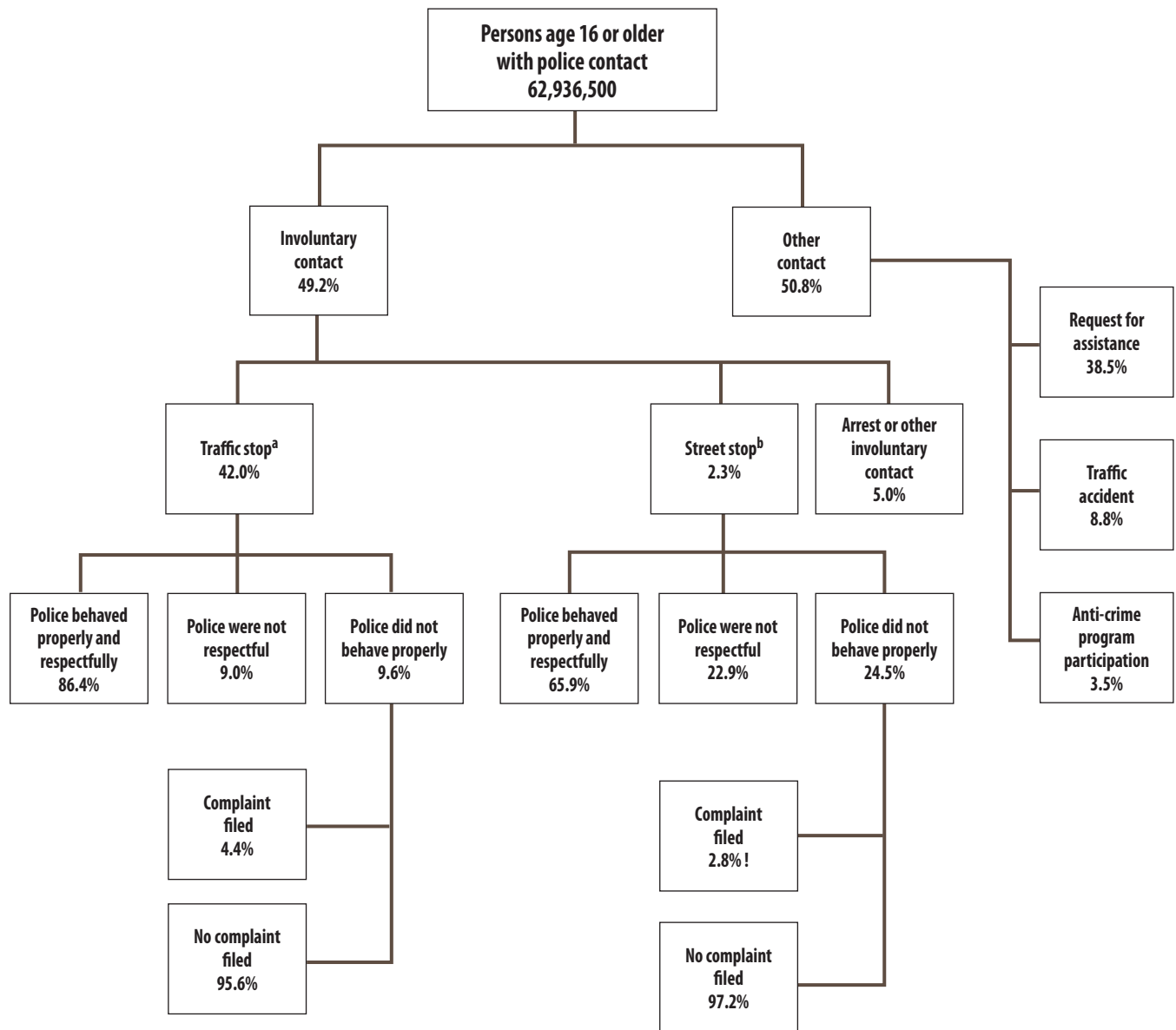
Victimization Survey (NCVS), which collects information from a nationally representative sample of persons in U.S. households. The PPCS collects information on contact with police during a 12-month period. This report examines involuntary contacts with police, specifically those that occurred when the person was the driver of a motor vehicle (i.e., traffic stops) or when the person was stopped by the police while in a public place but not in a moving vehicle (i.e., street stops). It describes variations in perceptions of police behavior and police legitimacy during traffic and street stops. (For more information on how perceptions of police behavior and legitimacy were measured in this report, see survey questions on page 12.) All findings in this report are based on persons for whom the most recent contact in 2011 was in a street stop or as the driver in a traffic stop. For information on voluntary contacts with police, see *Requests for Police Assistance, 2011*, NCJ 242938, BJS website, September 2013.

## HIGHLIGHTS

- Relatively more black drivers (13%) than white (10%) and Hispanic (10%) drivers were pulled over in a traffic stop during their most recent contact with police. There were no statistical differences in the race or Hispanic origin of persons involved in street stops.
- Persons involved in street stops were less likely (71%) than drivers in traffic stops (88%) to believe that the police behaved properly.
- Of those involved in traffic and street stops, a smaller percentage of blacks than whites believed the police behaved properly during the stop.
- Drivers pulled over by an officer of the same race or ethnicity were more likely (83%) than drivers pulled over by an officer of a different race or ethnicity (74%) to believe that the reason for the traffic stop was legitimate.
- White drivers were both ticketed and searched at lower rates than black and Hispanic drivers.
- Across race and Hispanic origin, persons who were searched during traffic stops were less likely than persons who were not searched to believe the police behaved properly during the stop.
- About 1% of drivers pulled over in traffic stops had physical force used against them by police. Of these drivers, 55% believed the police behaved properly during the stop.
- About 6 in 10 persons age 16 or older involved in street stops believed they were stopped for a legitimate reason.
- About 19% of persons involved in street stops were searched or frisked by police. The majority of persons who were searched or frisked did not believe the police had a legitimate reason for the search.

**FIGURE 1**

Perceptions that police behaved properly and respectfully during most recent contact with persons age 16 or older, by type of contact, 2011



Note: Based on the most recent contact with police during the past 12 months. Detail may not sum to 100% due to missing data and multiple responses. See appendix table 1 for estimates and standard errors.

<sup>a</sup>Includes being stopped by police as either a driver or a passenger in a motor vehicle. All other tables focus on the driver of the motor vehicle in a traffic stop.

<sup>b</sup>Includes being stopped by police in a public place, not a moving vehicle.

! Interpret with caution. Estimate based on 10 or fewer sample cases or the coefficient of variation is greater than 50%.

Source: Bureau of Justice Statistics, National Crime Victimization Survey, Police-Public Contact Survey, 2011.

**About 71% of persons involved in streets stops thought the police behaved properly, compared to 88% of drivers pulled over in traffic stops**

In 2011, less than 1% of the 241.4 million U.S. residents age 16 or older were involved in a street stop during their most recent contact with police (table 1; appendix table 2). A greater percentage of males (1%) than females (less than 1%) were involved in street stops during 2011. Persons ages 16 to 24 were more likely than persons age 35 or older to be involved in street stops. While no differences were observed in the percentage of non-Hispanic white, non-Hispanic black, and Hispanic populations age 16 or older involved in a street stop, among those who were stopped, a smaller percentage of blacks (38%) than Hispanics (63%) or whites (78%) felt the police behaved properly during the stop.

Traffic stops were a more common form of police contact than street stops in 2011. About 10% of the 212.3 million U.S. drivers age 16 or older were stopped while operating a

motor vehicle during their most recent contact with police.<sup>1</sup> As with street stops, a greater percentage of male drivers (12%) than female drivers (8%) were pulled over in traffic stops. Across age groups, the highest percentage of stopped drivers was among drivers ages 18 to 24 (18%). A higher percentage of black drivers (13%) than white (10%) and Hispanic (10%) drivers age 16 or older were pulled over in a traffic stop during their most recent contact with police.

A higher percentage of drivers in traffic stops (88%) than persons involved in street stops (71%) believed the police behaved properly during the stop. White drivers pulled over by police (89%) were more likely than black drivers (83%) to think that the police behaved properly, while no difference was observed between the percentages of stopped white drivers and Hispanic drivers who thought that the police behaved properly. There was also no statistical difference in the percentages of black and Hispanic stopped drivers who believed the police behaved properly.

<sup>1</sup>The driving population includes persons age 16 or older who reported driving a few or more times during the year or who were stopped as the driver in a traffic stop during 2011.

**TABLE 1**  
**Involuntary contact with police among persons age 16 or older, by demographic characteristics and type of contact, 2011**

Demographic characteristics	Street stops <sup>a</sup>			Traffic stops <sup>b</sup>		
	Percent of all persons	Percent of stopped persons		Percent of all drivers <sup>c</sup>	Percent of stopped drivers	
		Total	Police behaved properly <sup>d</sup>		Total	Police behaved properly <sup>d</sup>
<b>Total</b>	0.6%	100%	70.7%	10.2%	100%	88.2%
<b>Sex</b>						
Male	0.8%	67.5%	69.8%	11.9%	58.8%	86.9%
Female	0.4	32.5	72.7	8.4	41.2	89.9
<b>Race/Hispanic origin</b>						
White <sup>e</sup>	0.6%	65.2%	77.6%	9.8%	69.3%	89.4%
Black/African American <sup>e</sup>	0.6	12.4	37.7!	12.8	12.6	82.7
Hispanic/Latino	0.7	15.3	62.9	10.4	12.2	86.5
American Indian/Alaska Native <sup>e</sup>	0.5!	0.6!	100!	15.0	0.6	74.2
Asian/Native Hawaiian/other Pacific Islander <sup>e</sup>	0.4!	3.6!	85.0!	9.4	4.0	89.5
Two or more races <sup>e</sup>	1.8!	3.1!	76.6!	13.4	1.3	94.8
<b>Age</b>						
16-17	1.5%	8.5%	67.4%	9.0%	1.8%	92.3%
18-24	1.6	31.7	72.1	17.8	19.5	85.1
25-34	0.9	27.1	64.4	12.7	22.4	88.1
35-44	0.4	10.6	81.6	11.3	19.8	87.9
45-54	0.4	10.9	79.7	9.4	17.9	88.7
55-64	0.2	5.5	62.2!	7.1	11.4	89.7
65 or older	0.2	5.7	68.8!	4.8	7.2	92.3

Note: See appendix table 2 for estimates of the U.S. population and driving population age 16 or older and appendix table 3 for standard errors.

! Interpret with caution. Estimate based on 10 or fewer sample cases or the coefficient of variation is greater than 50%.

<sup>a</sup>Includes persons stopped by police during the past 12 months for whom the most recent contact involved being stopped by police on the street or in public, but not in a moving motor vehicle.

<sup>b</sup>Includes persons stopped by police during the past 12 months for whom the most recent contact was as a driver in a traffic stop.

<sup>c</sup>Percents based on the driving population age 16 or older, which includes PPCS respondents who reported driving a few times a year or more or were the driver in a traffic stop.

<sup>d</sup>Denominator includes approximately 2% of respondents who did not know or did not report whether police behaved properly.

<sup>e</sup>Excludes persons of Hispanic or Latino origin.

Source: Bureau of Justice Statistics, National Crime Victimization Survey, Police-Public Contact Survey, 2011.

## Traffic stops

**Regardless of the reason for the traffic stop, black (67%) and Hispanic (74%) drivers were less likely than white drivers (84%) to believe the reason for the stop was legitimate**

In 2011, a greater percentage of white drivers (84%) than Hispanic (74%) or black drivers (67%) who were stopped by police believed they were pulled over for a legitimate reason (table 2). Across all races and Hispanic origin, drivers stopped for speeding were among the most likely to perceive that the reason for the traffic stop was legitimate (90% of white, 83% of Hispanic, and 73% of black drivers). In general, drivers who were pulled over and not given a reason for the traffic stop were the least likely to think the traffic

stop was legitimate. For example, 51% of white drivers who were stopped without the police giving a reason believed the stop was legitimate, whereas 84% who were given a reason believed that the stop was legitimate.

Among other reasons for traffic stops that were associated with comparatively lower perceptions that the stop was legitimate, less than 70% of white (69%), black (69%), and Hispanic (64%) drivers who were pulled over for a stop light or stop sign violation believed the police had a legitimate reason for stopping them. Less than 70% of black drivers stopped due to a vehicle defect (69%), a seatbelt or cell phone violation (64%), or an illegal turn or lane change violation (65%) thought the police had a legitimate reason for stopping them.

**TABLE 2**

**Perception that reason for traffic stop was legitimate among drivers age 16 or older, by race or Hispanic origin of driver and reason for stop, 2011**

Reason for traffic stop	Percent of stopped drivers				
	All	White <sup>a</sup>	Black/African American <sup>a</sup>	Hispanic/Latino	Other <sup>a,b</sup>
Any reasons	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
<b>Police gave reason for the stop</b>					
Speeding	46.5	50.1	37.7	39.2	37.3
Vehicle defect	14.1	12.7	19.0	16.5	14.6
Record check	9.7	9.0	14.0	9.7	9.9
Roadside sobriety check	1.3	1.6	0.4!	1.0!	1.0!
Seatbelt or cell phone violation	6.6	6.6	6.5	6.5	7.4
Illegal turn or lane change	7.0	6.6	7.0	7.1	10.8
Stop sign/light violation	6.7	6.1	5.5	9.9	9.4
Other reason <sup>c</sup>	5.1	4.7	5.3	6.8	5.2
<b>Police did not give reason for the stop</b>	3.1	2.6	4.7	3.3	4.2!
Reason for traffic stop	Percent reporting reason for stop was legitimate <sup>d</sup>				
	All	White <sup>a</sup>	Black/African American <sup>a</sup>	Hispanic/Latino	Other <sup>a,b</sup>
Any reasons	80.0%	83.6%	67.5%	73.6%	78.4%
<b>Police gave reason for the stop</b>					
Speeding	87.1	89.6	72.8	83.1	87.3
Vehicle defect	81.2	86.4	69.0	74.4	79.3
Record check	80.0	80.9	83.0	70.7	81.2
Roadside sobriety check	79.4	86.0	--!	56.6!	68.1!
Seatbelt or cell phone violation	79.7	84.0	63.8	77.3	69.0!
Illegal turn or lane change	73.0	75.4	65.0	72.6	67.1
Stop sign/light violation	68.4	68.8	69.2	63.6	74.6
Other reason <sup>c</sup>	59.1	65.2	21.6!	61.9	67.8!
<b>Police did not give reason for the stop</b>	44.6	51.0	36.6!	18.3!	59.8!

Note: Based on persons for whom the most recent contact with police was as a driver in a traffic stop. See appendix table 4 for standard errors.

! Interpret with caution. Estimate based on 10 or fewer cases or the coefficient of variation is greater than 50%.

-- Less than 0.05%.

<sup>a</sup>Excludes persons of Hispanic or Latino origin.

<sup>b</sup>Includes persons identifying as American Indian, Alaska Native, Asian, Native Hawaiian, or other Pacific Islander, and persons of two or more races.

<sup>c</sup>Denominator includes approximately 3% of white, 6% of black, 3% of Hispanic, and 4% of other race drivers who did not know or did not report whether the reason for the stop was legitimate.

<sup>d</sup>Includes reasons such as reckless driving, littering, failure to yield, following too closely, obstructed license plate, and noise violations.

Source: Bureau of Justice Statistics, National Crime Victimization Survey, Police-Public Contact Survey, 2011.

**A greater percentage of drivers pulled over by an officer of the same race or ethnicity (83%) than drivers stopped by an officer of a different race or ethnicity (74%) believed the reason for the traffic stop was legitimate**

About 83% of drivers pulled over by an officer of the same race or Hispanic origin thought the reason for the traffic stop was legitimate, compared to 74% of drivers pulled over by an officer of a different race or Hispanic origin (table 3).<sup>2</sup> However, drivers' perceptions of traffic stop legitimacy varied somewhat by the reason for the stop and whether the driver and officer were the same race or Hispanic origin. When the reason for the stop was speeding, a vehicle

defect, a roadside sobriety check, or a seatbelt or cell phone violation, drivers pulled over by an officer of a different race or ethnicity were less likely than drivers pulled over by an officer of the same race or ethnicity to perceive the reason for the traffic stop to be legitimate. In comparison, a similar percentage of drivers stopped for a record check, an illegal turn or lane change, or a stop light or stop sign violation perceived the stop to be legitimate, regardless of whether the officer was the same race or ethnicity as the driver or a different race or ethnicity. Whether the driver and officer were intraracial (41%) or interracial (42%), the officer's failure to give a reason for the stop resulted in less than half of stopped drivers believing the stop was legitimate.

<sup>2</sup>Data on officer race or Hispanic origin are based on respondent's perception.

**TABLE 3**

**Perception that reason for traffic stop was legitimate among drivers age 16 or older, by reason for stop and whether driver and officer were intra- or interracial, 2011**

Reason for traffic stop	Intraracial driver and officer		Interracial driver and officer	
	Total stopped drivers	Reason for stop was legitimate <sup>a</sup>	Total stopped drivers	Reason for stop was legitimate <sup>a</sup>
Any reasons	100%	83.3%	100%	74.4%
Police gave reason for the stop				
Speeding	51.1	89.4	42.3	83.6
Vehicle defect	13.0	84.4	16.7	74.6
Record check	8.7	79.3	9.6	80.8
Roadside sobriety check	1.4	83.4	0.4!	38.5!
Seatbelt or cell phone violation	6.1	86.2	7.2	70.4
Illegal turn or lane change	6.6	75.2	7.3	67.7
Stop sign/light violation	6.0	70.9	7.5	62.3
Other reason <sup>b</sup>	4.6	63.6	5.8	45.6
Police did not give reason for the stop	2.4	46.8	3.1	41.8

Note: Based on persons for whom the most recent contact with police was as a driver in a traffic stop. Information on the race or Hispanic origin of the officer is based on respondent's perception. Excludes drivers who were stopped by two or more officers of different races or Hispanic origin and officers whose race or Hispanic origin were unknown to the driver. See appendix table 5 for standard errors.

<sup>a</sup>Denominator includes approximately 3% of respondents who did not know or did not report whether the reason for the stop was legitimate.

<sup>b</sup>Includes reasons such as reckless driving, littering, failure to yield, following too closely, obstructed license plate, and noise violations.

! Interpret with caution. Estimate based on 10 or fewer sample cases or the coefficient of variation is greater than 50%.

Source: Bureau of Justice Statistics, National Crime Victimization Survey, Police-Public Contact Survey, 2011.

While the majority of drivers pulled over in a traffic stop were stopped by white officers, a larger percentage of black drivers (14%) than white (4%) or Hispanic (3%) drivers were stopped by black officers (table 4). Similarly, a greater percentage of Hispanic drivers was stopped by Hispanic officers (17%) than were white (3%) or black (6%) drivers.

A similar percentage of white drivers believed the reason for the stop was legitimate, regardless of whether they were stopped by white, Hispanic, or black officers. While black drivers had similar perceptions of police legitimacy when pulled over by white (70%) or black (71%) officers, a lower percentage of black drivers stopped by Hispanic officers perceived the stop to be legitimate (47%). Among Hispanic drivers, no differences were observed in perceptions of traffic stop legitimacy, regardless of the race or Hispanic origin of the officer.

**Among drivers who thought the reason for the stop was not legitimate, 65% believed the police behaved properly, compared to 94% among drivers who thought the stop was legitimate**

When the reason for the traffic stop was not seen as legitimate, a smaller percentage of white, black, and Hispanic drivers believed the police behaved properly during the stop than when the reason for the stop was legitimate. Whether the driver and officer were intra- or inter-racial, relatively fewer whites, blacks, and Hispanics thought the police behaved properly when the reason for the stop was perceived to be illegitimate. Regardless of the race or Hispanic of the officer, over 90% of white, black, and Hispanic drivers who believed the stop was legitimate also thought that the police behaved properly. Among white and Hispanic drivers who believed the police had no legitimate reason for the stop, the percentage who also believed that the police behaved properly did not vary, regardless of whether the officer was white, black, or Hispanic. Among black drivers who believed the officer had no legitimate reason for the traffic stop, a higher percentage thought the police behaved properly when the officer was black (87%) than when the officer was white (58%) or Hispanic (55%).

**TABLE 4**  
**Perception that reason for traffic stop was legitimate among drivers age 16 or older, by race and ethnicity of driver and officer and driver's perception that police behaved properly, 2011**

Race and ethnicity of driver and officer	Percent of all drivers	Total <sup>a</sup>	Reason for stop was legitimate <sup>b</sup>	Police behaved properly <sup>c</sup>	
				Reason for stop was legitimate	Reason for stop was not legitimate
<b>Total</b>	10.2%	100%	80.0%	93.9%	65.0%
<b>White driver<sup>d,e</sup></b>	9.8%	100%	83.6%	93.9%	64.5%
White officer <sup>d</sup>	7.9	81.0	84.0	93.8	67.2
Black/African American officer <sup>d</sup>	0.4	4.3	82.3	96.6	60.3
Hispanic/Latino officer	0.3	3.3	76.5	98.0	63.5
<b>Black/African American driver<sup>d,e</sup></b>	12.8%	100%	67.5%	94.2%	58.7%
White officer <sup>d</sup>	8.3	65.3	70.2	93.6	58.3
Black/African American officer <sup>d</sup>	1.8	13.8	70.7	91.6	87.1
Hispanic/Latino officer	0.7	5.7	46.8	100	55.4!
<b>Hispanic/Latino driver<sup>e</sup></b>	10.4%	100%	73.6%	94.7%	60.1%
White officer <sup>d</sup>	6.7	64.9	74.3	94.2	64.1
Black/African American officer <sup>d</sup>	0.3	3.2	74.1	94.2!	64.3!
Hispanic/Latino officer	1.7	16.7	77.4	93.8	54.4!
<b>Other driver<sup>d,e</sup></b>	10.5%	100%	78.4%	91.9%	78.7%
White officer <sup>d</sup>	7.6	72.3	80.3	93.1	75.0
Black/African American officer <sup>d</sup>	0.3!	3.1!	52.7!	51.2!	79.4!
Hispanic/Latino officer	0.6!	5.8!	76.9!	100!	100!

Note: Based on persons for whom the most recent contact with police was as a driver in a traffic stop. Information on the race or Hispanic origin of the officer is based on driver's perception. See appendix table 6 for standard errors.

! Interpret with caution. Estimate based on 10 or fewer sample cases or the coefficient of variation was greater than 50%.

-- Less than 0.05%.

<sup>a</sup>Percentages do not sum to 100% due to 11% of white drivers, 15% of black drivers, 15% of Hispanic drivers, and 19% of other race drivers who were stopped by officers identified as American Indian, Alaska Native, Asian, Native Hawaiian, other Pacific Islander, or two or more races; groups of officers of different races and Hispanic origin; and officers whose race or Hispanic origin was unknown to the driver.

<sup>b</sup>Denominator includes approximately 3% of respondents who did not know or did not report whether the reason for the stop was legitimate.

<sup>c</sup>Denominator includes approximately 1% of drivers who thought the stop was legitimate and 6% of drivers who did not think it was legitimate who did not know or did not report whether the police behaved properly.

<sup>d</sup>Excludes persons of Hispanic or Latino origin.

<sup>e</sup>Includes officers identified as American Indian, Alaska Native, Asian, Native Hawaiian, or other Pacific Islander, and persons of two or more races.

Source: Bureau of Justice Statistics, National Crime Victimization Survey, Police-Public Contact Survey, 2011.

**In 2011, there were small racial differences in the percentage of drivers who were ticketed**

About 5% of the 212.3 million drivers age 16 or older were pulled over and ticketed in the most recent contact with police (table 5). Another 3% of all drivers were pulled over and given a verbal or written warning and 1% were allowed to proceed with no enforcement action after being stopped.

A greater percentage of male drivers (6%) were ticketed than female drivers (4%), and a greater percentage of black (7%) and Hispanic (6%) drivers were ticketed than white drivers (5%). A greater percentage of black drivers (2%) were stopped and allowed to proceed with a no enforcement action than white (1%) and Hispanic (1%) drivers. A greater percentage of drivers ages 18 to 24 (10%) were ticketed than drivers in any other age group.

The majority (93%) of stopped drivers who were issued a warning believed that the police behaved properly during the stop. Regardless of the demographic characteristics of the driver, 87% to 95% of drivers who were issued a warning

after being stopped believed the police behaved properly. Among drivers of all sexes, ages, races and Hispanic origin ticketed by police, the percentage who believed the police behaved properly ranged from 81% to 90%.

Across most demographic characteristics examined, stopped drivers who were allowed to proceed without any enforcement action were less likely than drivers who were issued a warning to believe the police behaved properly. Since previous findings in this report suggest an association between perceptions of traffic stop legitimacy and perceptions that police behaved properly, this may suggest that drivers were less likely to believe the reason for the stop was legitimate when no enforcement action occurred as a result of the stop.

In 2011, 1% of stopped drivers were arrested during the stop. The majority of arrested drivers also received a ticket or a warning during the stop. Among stopped drivers who were arrested, 76% believed the police behaved properly (not shown in table).

**TABLE 5**  
**Enforcement actions taken by police against drivers age 16 or older, by driver’s demographic characteristics and perception that police behaved properly, 2011**

Race of driver	Ticketed			Warned			Allowed to proceed with no enforcement action		
	Percent of all drivers	Percent of stopped drivers		Percent of all drivers	Percent of stopped drivers		Percent of all drivers	Percent of stopped drivers	
		Ticketed drivers	Police behaved properly <sup>a</sup>		Warned drivers	Police behaved properly <sup>a</sup>		Drivers with no enforcement	Police behaved properly <sup>a</sup>
All drivers	5.3%	100%	86.6%	3.4%	100%	93.3%	1.4%	100%	82.5%
<b>Sex</b>									
Male	6.2%	58.5%	86.2%	3.9%	57.8%	92.4%	1.7%	61.7%	78.6%
Female	4.4	41.5	87.2	2.9	42.2	94.5	1.1	38.3	88.9
<b>Race/Hispanic origin</b>									
White <sup>b</sup>	4.8%	65.5%	87.5%	3.6%	75.5%	94.2%	1.4%	69.2%	84.5%
Black/African American <sup>b</sup>	7.0	13.2	81.1	3.5	10.5	87.4	2.1	14.7	78.9
Hispanic/Latino	6.2	14.0	86.6	2.8	9.9	91.7	1.3	11.0	74.7
Other <sup>b,c</sup>	6.7	7.2	89.1	2.5	4.1	94.6	1.3	5.1	83.9
<b>Age</b>									
16–17	3.9%	1.5%	88.2%	4.2%	2.5%	94.5%	0.9%!	1.3%	100%!
18–24	9.8	20.5	84.4	5.2	17.1	91.5	2.7	21.2	76.9
25–34	7.2	24.1	85.4	4.1	21.6	95.0	1.4	17.5	81.5
35–44	6.1	20.3	86.6	3.9	20.2	92.7	1.3	16.9	79.8
45–54	4.7	17.2	88.3	3.1	17.9	91.8	1.5	20.9	83.5
55–64	3.4	10.6	89.1	2.4	11.7	94.2	1.2	13.4	87.6
65 or older	2.0	5.7	89.9	2.0	9.0	95.4	0.8	8.8	90.8

Note: Based on persons for whom the most recent contact with police was as a driver in a traffic stop. Excludes a small percentage of drivers who were arrested without any other enforcement action (0.4%). See appendix table 7 for standard errors.

! Interpret with caution. Estimate based on 10 or fewer sample cases or the coefficient of variation is greater than 50%.

<sup>a</sup>Denominator includes approximately 3% of respondents who did not know or did not report whether police behaved properly.

<sup>b</sup>Excludes persons of Hispanic or Latino origin.

<sup>c</sup>Includes persons identifying as American Indian, Alaska Native, Asian, Native Hawaiian, or other Pacific Islander, and persons of two or more races.

Source: Bureau of Justice Statistics, National Crime Victimization Survey, Police-Public Contact Survey, 2011.

**Among black and Hispanic stopped drivers, a similar percentage of ticketed and not ticketed drivers believed the police behaved properly during the traffic stop**

Among drivers stopped in traffic stops, there was no statistical difference in the percentage of white (50%) and black (55%) stopped drivers were ticketed in 2011. Hispanic stopped drivers (60%) were more likely than white stopped drivers to receive a ticket. A greater percentage of white drivers were ticketed when stopped by black officers (64%) than white officers (49%) (table 6). However, for black and Hispanic drivers stopped by police, the percentage issued

a ticket did not vary by the race or Hispanic origin of the officer. These differences and similarities in enforcement practices by race or Hispanic origin of the driver and officer may be related to the reason for the traffic stop or other factors and do not necessarily reflect biased or unbiased treatment.

Among white, black, and Hispanic drivers who were stopped and ticketed, the percentage who believed the police behaved properly did not vary regardless of whether the officer was white, black, or Hispanic. Overall, for most racial and ethnic groups, the majority of stopped drivers believed the police behaved properly whether a ticket was issued or not.

**TABLE 6**  
**Stopped drivers age 16 or older who were ticketed, by race of officer and driver and driver's perception that police behaved properly, 2011**

Race of driver and officer	Percent of all drivers issued a ticket	Percent of stopped drivers <sup>a</sup>		
		Ticketed	Police behaved properly	
			Ticketed drivers	Drivers not ticketed <sup>b</sup>
<b>White driver<sup>c,d</sup></b>	4.8%	49.5%	87.5%	91.2%
White officer <sup>c</sup>	3.9	49.2	87.5	91.6
Black/African American officer <sup>c</sup>	0.3	63.6	86.5	96.7
Hispanic/Latino officer	0.2	50.2	88.3	91.5
<b>Black/African American driver<sup>c,d</sup></b>	7.0%	55.1%	81.1%	84.6%
White officer <sup>c</sup>	4.7	56.5	80.5	86.3
Black/African American officer <sup>c</sup>	1.1	63.2	88.9	92.6
Hispanic/Latino officer	0.4	53.4	74.4!	78.4!
<b>Hispanic/Latino driver<sup>d</sup></b>	6.2%	60.2%	86.6%	86.4%
White officer <sup>c</sup>	3.9	58.7	85.0	88.3
Black/African American officer <sup>c</sup>	0.2!	52.9!	91.9!	80.4!
Hispanic/Latino officer	1.0	59.1	88.7	79.4
<b>Other driver<sup>c,d</sup></b>	6.7%	64.0%	89.1%	89.3%
White officer <sup>c</sup>	4.8	63.5	89.5	89.5
Black/African American officer <sup>c</sup>	0.3	89.1	60.2!	100!
Hispanic/Latino officer	0.6!	100!	100!	--!

Note: Based on persons for whom the most recent contact with police was as a driver in a traffic stop. Information on the race or Hispanic origin of the officer is based on driver's perception. Excludes drivers who were stopped by officers identified as American Indian, Alaska Native, Asian, Native Hawaiian, other Pacific Islander, or two or more races; drivers stopped by groups of officers of different races and Hispanic origin; and officers whose race or Hispanic origin was unknown to the driver. See appendix table 8 for standard errors.

-- Less than 0.05%.

! Interpret with caution. Estimate based on 10 or fewer sample cases or the coefficient of variation is greater than 50%.

<sup>a</sup>Denominator includes about 2% of respondents who did not know or did not report whether police behaved properly.

<sup>b</sup>Includes drivers who were given a verbal or written warning or allowed to proceed without any enforcement action.

<sup>c</sup>Excludes persons of Hispanic or Latino origin.

<sup>d</sup>Includes officers identified as American Indians, Alaska Natives, Asians, Native Hawaiians, or other Pacific Islanders, and persons of two or more races.

Source: Bureau of Justice Statistics, National Crime Victimization Survey, Police-Public Contact Survey, 2011.



**Stopped drivers who were searched were less likely than drivers who were not searched to believe that the police behaved properly**

In 2011, 3% of drivers pulled over by police in a traffic stop had their person or vehicle searched (table 7). A greater percentage of male drivers (4%) than female drivers (2%) were searched during traffic stops. Male drivers accounted for 76% of searches conducted among stopped drivers. A lower percentage of white drivers stopped by police were searched (2%) than black (6%) or Hispanic (7%) drivers. A greater percentage of stopped drivers ages 18 to 34 (5%) than those age 55 or older (1%) was searched during traffic stops.

Across all demographic groups examined, a smaller percentage of drivers who had their person or vehicle searched by police during a traffic stop than drivers who were not searched believed the police behaved properly. Overall, 61% of searched drivers believed the police behaved properly, compared to 89% of drivers who were stopped but not searched. The percentage of searched drivers who believed the police behaved properly did not vary by sex, race or Hispanic origin, or age.

**TABLE 7**  
**Stopped drivers age 16 or older who were searched by police, by driver’s demographic characteristics and perception that police behaved properly, 2011**

Demographic characteristics	Percent of all stopped drivers searched by police	Percent of stopped drivers <sup>a</sup>		
		Searched	Police behaved properly	
			Searched drivers	Drivers not searched
<b>Total</b>	3.5%	100%	61.3%	89.1%
<b>Sex</b>				
Male	4.5%	75.7%	61.0%	88.1%
Female	2.1	24.3	62.2	90.5
<b>Race/Hispanic origin</b>				
White <sup>b</sup>	2.3%	46.6%	62.4%	90.0%
Black/African American <sup>b</sup>	6.3	22.8	61.6	84.1
Hispanic/Latino	6.6	23.1	64.8	88.1
Other <sup>b,c</sup>	4.4!	7.4!	42.5!	91.3
<b>Age</b>				
16–17	1.4%!	0.7%!	--%!	93.5%
18–34	4.8	58.0	58.7	88.1
35–54	3.1	33.8	69.8	88.9
55 or older	1.4!	7.5!	49.0!	91.3

Note: Includes respondents for whom the most recent contact with police was as a driver in a traffic stop. See appendix table 9 for standard errors.

-- Less than 0.05%.

! Interpret with caution. Estimate based on 10 or fewer sample cases or the coefficient of variation is greater than 50%.

<sup>a</sup>Denominator includes about 6% of searched drivers and 2% of other stopped drivers who did not know or did not report whether the police behaved properly.

<sup>b</sup>Excludes persons of Hispanic or Latino origin.

<sup>c</sup>Includes persons identifying as Native American, Alaska Native, Asian, Native Hawaiian, or other Pacific Islander, and persons of two or more races.

Source: Bureau of Justice Statistics, National Crime Victimization Survey, Police-Public Contact Survey, 2011.

**When the police did not ask permission to conduct a search, less than half of searched drivers thought the officers behaved properly during the traffic stop**

Less than half (46%) of drivers believed the police behaved properly when a person or vehicle search was conducted without the police first asking permission to conduct the search or without the police having a perceived legitimate reason to conduct the search (table 8). When the police asked permission before conducting a search during a traffic stop, a greater percentage of drivers believed the police behaved properly (72%). Similarly, a greater percentage of drivers thought the police behaved properly when they believed the police had a legitimate reason for conducting the search (86%) than when the reason for the search was not seen as legitimate (46%). About 6% of searched drivers reported that the police uncovered illegal items during the search (not shown in table).

**More than half of drivers who experienced police use of physical force or verbal threats thought police behaved properly**

In 2011, 6% of drivers pulled over in traffic stops experienced some type of force used against them, from shouting and cursing, to verbal threats of force or other action, to physical force, including hitting, handcuffing, and pointing a gun (table 9). Of the 1% of stopped drivers who experienced physical force during the traffic stop, more than half (55%) believed the police behaved properly during the contact. A similar percentage of drivers who experienced verbal threats of force believed the police behaved properly (56%).

Three in 4 (75%) stopped drivers who experienced any type of force believed the police actions were unnecessary. About two-thirds (65%) of drivers who experienced police use of force did not think the force was excessive. Among stopped drivers who experienced any type of verbal or physical force, 83% who believed the force used or threatened against them was necessary also thought police behaved properly, compared to 38% of those who did not believe the use of force was necessary.

**TABLE 8**  
Stopped drivers age 16 or older who had their person or vehicle searched by police, by perception that police behaved properly, 2011

Stop characteristics	Percent of stopped drivers	
	Total	Police behaved properly <sup>a</sup>
All stops	100%	88.2%
Police searched driver or vehicle		
No	96.4%	89.3%
Yes	3.5	61.4
	Percent of searched drivers	
Police asked permission to search <sup>b</sup>		
No	40.2%	46.0%
Yes	59.8	71.8
Driver thought search was legitimate <sup>b</sup>		
No	61.4%	46.1%
Yes	38.6	85.8

Note: Based on persons for whom the most recent contact with police was as a driver in a traffic stop. See appendix table 10 for standard errors.

<sup>a</sup>Denominator includes about 6% of searched and 2% of other stopped drivers not searched who did not know or did not report whether the police behaved properly.

<sup>b</sup>Based on the number of drivers who experienced a personal or vehicular search.

Source: Bureau of Justice Statistics, National Crime Victimization Survey, Police-Public Contact Survey, 2011.

**TABLE 9**  
Type of force used or threatened by police against stopped drivers age 16 or older, by perception that police behaved properly, 2011

Type of force	Percent of stopped drivers	
	Total	Police behaved properly <sup>a</sup>
All stops	100%	88.2%
Force used		
Shouting or cursing <sup>b</sup>	1.2%	22.0%!
Verbal threats <sup>c</sup>	3.4	56.4
Physical force <sup>d</sup>	1.5	55.0
	Percent of drivers who experienced force	
Driver thought use of force was necessary <sup>e</sup>		
No	74.7%	38.4%
Yes	19.1	83.3
Driver thought use of force was excessive <sup>e</sup>		
No	64.6%	68.3%
Yes	33.3	12.4!

Note: Includes persons for whom the most recent contact with police was as a driver in a traffic stop. See appendix table 11 for standard errors.

! Interpret with caution. Estimate based on 10 or fewer sample cases or the coefficient of variation is greater than 50%.

<sup>a</sup>Denominator includes about 3% of respondents who did not know or did not report whether the police behaved properly.

<sup>b</sup>Excludes stopped drivers who experienced verbal threats or physical force.

<sup>c</sup>Includes threats of arrest, ticketing, or use of force. Excludes stopped drivers who experienced physical force used against them.

<sup>d</sup>Includes pushing, grabbing, hitting, kicking, handcuffing, using chemical or pepper spray, using an electroshock weapon, or pointing a gun.

<sup>e</sup>Based on stopped drivers who had force (shouting or cursing, verbal threats, or physical force) used against them by police. Percent of stopped drivers does not sum to 100% due to persons who did not know whether the use of force was necessary or excessive.

Source: Bureau of Justice Statistics, National Crime Victimization Survey, Police-Public Contact Survey, 2011.

## Street stops

### About 6 in 10 persons involved in street stops believed they were stopped for a legitimate reason

In 2011, less than 1% of persons age 16 or older were stopped by the police while in a public place (table 10). Among persons stopped by the police in a street stop during their most recent police contact, at least 41% were stopped because the police suspected them of something or they matched the description of someone for whom the police were looking. At least 16% of persons involved in street stops said the police did not provide a reason for the stop or the police were seeking information about another person or investigating a crime, and at least 7% were stopped because the police were providing a service. About 20% of persons involved in street stops did not report a reason for the stop.

Overall, 64% of persons involved in street stops believed the police stopped them for a legitimate reason. Among persons who were stopped because the police suspected them of something, 61% thought the reason for the stop was legitimate. The percentage of persons who thought the reason for the stop was legitimate was higher among those who were stopped because the police were providing a service (91%) or seeking information or investigating a crime (92%). Similarly, compared to those who were stopped because the police were investigating a crime (90%) or were providing assistance (96%), a lower percentage of persons stopped because they were suspected of something believed the police behaved properly (68%).

**TABLE 10**  
Reason for street stops involving persons age 16 or older, by perceptions that stop was legitimate and police behaved properly, 2011

Reason for street stop	Percent of all persons	Percent of stopped persons		
		Total	Reason for stop was legitimate <sup>a</sup>	Police behaved properly <sup>b</sup>
Any reasons	0.6%	100%	64.1%	70.7%
Suspected of something or matched description of someone police were looking for <sup>c</sup>	0.2	40.7	60.8	68.5
Police were seeking information about another person or investigating a crime	0.1	15.5	92.1	89.8
Police were providing a service	--	6.9	90.8	95.9
No reason given by police	0.1	16.5	29.7	49.0
Unknown <sup>d</sup>	0.1	20.4	68.1	69.8

Note: Based on persons for whom the most recent contact with police involved being stopped by police in public or on the street, not in a moving vehicle. See appendix table 12 for standard errors.

-- Less than 0.05%.

<sup>a</sup>Denominator includes less than 1% of respondents who did know or did not report whether police had a legitimate reason for the stop.

<sup>b</sup>Denominator includes about 3% of respondents who did know or did not report whether police behaved properly.

<sup>c</sup>Includes street stops in which the respondent was with someone who the police suspected of something or who matched the description of someone for whom they were looking.

<sup>d</sup>No reason reported.

Source: Bureau of Justice Statistics, National Crime Victimization Survey, Police-Public Contact Survey, 2011.

Regardless of the reason for the stop, a slightly higher percentage of persons involved in a street stop with an officer of the same race or ethnicity believed that the police behaved properly (79%) than persons stopped by an officer of a different race or ethnicity (62%) (table 11). Persons least likely to believe the police behaved properly during street stops were those stopped for reasons they did not believe were legitimate (38%), persons who were searched without a perceived legitimate reason (29%), and persons who had force used against them (30%).<sup>3</sup>

<sup>3</sup>Due to small sample sizes, the percentage of persons who had illegal items uncovered in the search could not be calculated.

**TABLE 11**  
**Characteristics of persons age 16 or older involved in street stops and outcomes of the stop, by perceptions that police behaved properly, 2011**

Stop characteristics	Percent of stopped persons	
	Total	Police behaved properly <sup>a</sup>
All stops	100%	70.7%
Officer and respondent were the same race or Hispanic origin <sup>b</sup>		
No	22.4%	62.3%
Yes	54.5	78.8
Unknown <sup>c</sup>	23.1	59.8
Reason for stop was legitimate		
No	35.6%	37.5%
Yes	64.1	89.5
Searched or frisked		
No	78.9%	76.6%
Yes	19.1	53.8
Person thought search was legitimate		
No	11.1%	29.5%
Yes	8.0	87.9
Force used		
No	74.6%	84.5%
Yes	25.4	30.3
Person thought force was excessive		
No	17.3%	44.5%
Yes	7.0	--!

Note: Based on persons for whom the most recent contact with police involved being stopped by police in public or on the street, not in a moving vehicle. See appendix table 13 for standard errors.

-- Less than 0.05%.

! Interpret with caution. Estimate based on 10 or fewer sample cases or the coefficient of variation is greater than 50%.

<sup>a</sup>Denominator includes about 4% of respondents who did know or did not report whether police behaved properly.

<sup>b</sup>Information on the race or Hispanic origin of the officer is based on the person's perception.

<sup>c</sup>Includes person who were stopped by two or more officers of different races or Hispanic origin and officers whose race or Hispanic origin was unknown to the person.

Source: Bureau of Justice Statistics, National Crime Victimization Survey, Police-Public Contact Survey, 2011

## Police–Public Contact Survey questions pertaining to perceptions of police behavior and legitimacy of police actions

### Perceptions of police behavior

Q. Looking back in this contact, do you feel the police behaved properly?

### Perceptions of legitimacy of stop

Q. Would you say that the police officer(s) had a legitimate reason for stopping you?

### Perceptions of legitimacy of search

Q. Do you think the police officers had a legitimate reason to search the vehicle (asked of drivers in traffic stops only)?

Q. Do you think that police officers had a legitimate reason to search you, frisk you, or pat you down?

### Perceptions of police use of force

Q. Did you feel that this/these action(s) [used by police against you] was/were necessary?

Q. Did you feel any of the force used or force threatened against you was excessive?

## Methodology

### Data collection

The Police-Public Contact Survey (PPCS) is a supplement to the National Crime Victimization Survey (NCVS). The NCVS annually collects data on crime reported and not reported to the police against persons age 12 or older from a nationally representative sample of U.S. households. The sample includes persons living in group quarters (such as dormitories, rooming houses, and religious group dwellings) and excludes persons living in military barracks and institutional settings (such as correctional or hospital facilities) and the homeless. (For more information, see the *Survey Methodology in Criminal Victimization in the United States, 2008*, NCJ 231173, BJS website, May 2011.)

Since 1999, the PPCS has been administered every 3 years at the end of the NCVS interview to persons age 16 or older within households sampled for the NCVS. Proxy responders and those who complete the NCVS interview in a language other than English were not eligible to receive the PPCS.

The U.S. Census Bureau administered the 2011 PPCS questionnaire between July 1, 2011, and December 31, 2011, and processed the survey data. Respondents were provided a list of specific reasons for having contact with police and were asked if they had experienced any of those types of contacts during the prior 12 months. For example, persons interviewed in July 2011 were asked about contacts that occurred between August 2010 and July 2011. Persons who said they had a contact during 2011 were asked to describe the nature of the contact, and those who had more than one contact were asked about only their most recent contact during the period. To simplify the discussion of the findings, this report describes all contacts reported during the 12 months prior to the interviews as 2011 contacts.

PPCS nonrespondents consisted of persons whose household did not respond to the NCVS (NCVS household nonresponse), persons within an interviewed NCVS household who did not respond to the NCVS (NCVS person nonresponse), and persons who responded to the NCVS but did not complete the PPCS (PPCS person nonresponse). The NCVS household response rate was 89% and the person response rate was 88%. In 2011, PPCS interviews were obtained from 49,246 of the 62,280 individuals age 16 or older in the NCVS sample (79%). A total of 13,034 nonrespondents were excluded from the 2011 PPCS as noninterviews or as proxy interviews. Noninterviews (10,907) included respondents who were not available for the interview, those who refused to participate, and non-English-speaking respondents. (Unlike the NCVS interviews, PPCS interviews were conducted only in English.) The remaining 2,127 were proxy interviews representing household members who were unable to participate for physical, mental, or other reasons.

To produce national estimates on police-public contacts, sample weights were applied to the survey data so that the respondents represented the entire population, including the nonrespondents. After adjustment for nonresponse, the sample cases in 2011 were weighted to produce a national population estimate of 241,404,142 persons age 16 or older.

Despite the nonresponse adjustments, low overall response rates and response rates to particular survey items can still increase variance in these estimates and produce bias when the nonrespondents have characteristics that differ from the respondents. The Office of Management and Budget guidelines require a nonresponse bias study when the overall response rate is below 80%. The Bureau of Justice Statistics (BJS) and the Census Bureau compared the distributions of respondents as well as nonrespondents and nonresponse estimates for various household and demographic characteristics, and examined their impact on the national estimates produced for the 2011 PPCS. The study looked at household-level and person-level response rates and found some evidence of bias in the rates among blacks and persons of Hispanic origin. Blacks accounted for 12% of the U.S. population in 2011 but about 11% of PPCS respondents after weighting adjustments. Hispanics accounted for 14% of the U.S. population but about 12% of the PPCS respondents after weighting adjustments. Because the largest bias in person nonresponse was observed in the Hispanic origin characteristics, future iterations of the PPCS will address this issue by administering the survey in languages other than English and including Hispanic origin as a factor in the noninterview adjustment. Item nonresponse statistics were also computed for key survey questions from the PPCS, and no evidence of bias was found during the analysis.

### Changes to the 2011 PPCS

Since its inception in 1996, the PPCS has captured information about in-person (i.e., face-to-face) contacts between police and the public. Telephone contacts were previously not included. The survey also excluded face-to-face interactions in which persons approached an officer or an officer initiated contact with them in a social setting or because their work brought them into regular contact. In March 2010, BJS hosted a series of meetings with subject-matter experts in the area of policing and police legitimacy to initiate discussion and work on substantive changes to the PPCS questionnaire. In 2011, based in part on these meetings, the PPCS was revised to expand the scope of the survey and to better capture contacts with police.

First, to determine if contact occurred and to enhance individuals' recollections about their interactions with police over a 12-month period, BJS implemented new screening procedures in the 2011 PPCS that describe a broad range of situations known to bring people in contact with police. Second, the scope of the PPCS was expanded to collect information about interactions that people had with the police that did not result in a face-to-face contact

(e.g., reporting a crime to the police by phone or email). Additionally, a new set of questions was added to the instrument to collect detailed information about requests for police assistance (e.g., reporting a crime or noncrime emergency) and contacts in which the police stopped someone in a public place or on the street but not in a motor vehicle (known as street stops).

These revisions, which included adding new questions and reordering existing questions, were significant when compared to the 2008 version of the questionnaire. To assess the impact of the survey redesign on trends in rates and types of contact, BJS administered a split-sample design in which a subset of the sample was interviewed using the 2008 version of the questionnaire, and the remaining sample was interviewed using the 2011 version. Based on the evaluation, it was determined that a 15/85 split would provide sufficient power to measure a 15% change in contact rate. In other words, about 85% of the 2011 sample was randomly assigned the revised questionnaire and the other 15% received the questionnaire designed for the 2008 survey. The Census Bureau completed interviews for 41,408 (79%) of the 52,529 residents who received the revised questionnaire.

The findings in this report are based on data collected from the revised questionnaire. An evaluation of the impact of the changes to the 2011 PPCS instrument on trends in contacts between the police and the public is underway, and the results of that assessment will be made available through the BJS website.

### Standard error computations

When national estimates are derived from a sample, as is the case with the PPCS, caution must be taken when comparing one estimate to another estimate. Although one estimate may be larger than another, estimates based on a sample have some degree of sampling error. The sampling error of an estimate depends on several factors, including the amount of variation in the responses, the size of the sample, and the size of the subgroup for which the estimate is computed. When the sampling error around the estimates is taken into consideration, the estimates that appear different may, in fact, not be statistically different.

One measure of the sampling error associated with an estimate is the standard error. The standard error can vary from one estimate to the next. In general, for a given metric, an estimate with a smaller standard error provides a more reliable approximation of the true value than an estimate with a larger standard error. Estimates with relatively large standard errors are associated with less precision and reliability and should be interpreted with caution.

In order to generate standard errors around estimates from the PPCS, the Census Bureau produces generalized variance function (GVF) parameters for BJS. The GVFs take into account aspects of the NCVS complex sample design

and represent the curve fitted to a selection of individual standard errors based on the Jackknife Repeated Replication technique. The GVF parameters were used to generate standard errors for each point estimate (i.e., numbers or percentages) in the report.

In this report, BJS conducted tests to determine whether differences in estimated numbers and percentages were statistically significant once sampling error was taken into account. Using statistical programs developed specifically for the NCVS, all comparisons in the text were tested for significance. The primary test procedure used was Student's t-statistic, which tests the difference between two sample estimates. To ensure that the observed differences between estimates were larger than might be expected due to sampling variation, the significance level was set at the 95% confidence level.

Data users can use the estimates and the standard errors of the estimates provided in this report to generate a confidence interval around the estimate as a measure of the margin of error. The following example illustrates how standard errors can be used to generate confidence intervals:

According to the NCVS, in 2011, an estimated 88.2% of drivers stopped by police in traffic stops believed that the police behaved properly during the contact (see table 1). Using the GVFs, BJS determined that the estimate has a standard error of 1.13 (see appendix table 3). A confidence interval around the estimate was generated by multiplying the standard errors by  $\pm 1.96$  (the t-score of a normal, two-tailed distribution that excludes 2.5% at either end of the distribution). Thus, the confidence interval around the estimate is  $88.2 \pm (1.13 \times 1.96)$  or 86.1 to 90.4. In other words, if different samples using the same procedures were taken from the U.S. population in 2011, 95% of the time the percentage of stopped drivers who believed the police behaved properly would be between 86% and 90%.

In this report, BJS also calculated a coefficient of variation (CV) for all estimates, representing the ratio of the standard error to the estimate. CVs provide a measure of reliability and a means to compare the precision of estimates across measures with differing levels or metrics. In cases where the CV was greater than 50%, or the unweighted sample had 10 or fewer cases, the estimate was noted with a "!" symbol (interpret data with caution; estimate is based on 10 or fewer sample cases, or the coefficient of variation exceeds 50%).

Many of the variables examined in this report may be related to one another and to other variables not included in the analyses. Complex relationships among variables were not fully explored in this report and warrant more extensive analysis. Readers are cautioned not to draw causal inferences based on the results presented.

### APPENDIX TABLE 1

Standard errors and estimates for figure 1: Perceptions that police behaved properly and respectfully during most recent contact with persons age 16 or older, by type of contact, 2011

Stop characteristic	Number of persons 16 or older	Standard error	
		Number	Percent
<b>Any contact</b>	62,936,500	1,581,523	~%
<b>Involuntary contact</b>	30,954,800	1,079,805	1.2%
Traffic stop	26,404,200	982,622	1.1
Driver thought police did not behave properly	2,547,600	218,913	0.7
Compliant filed			
Yes	110,900	31,184	1.2
No	2,436,700	212,649	1.5
Driver thought police were not respectful	2,371,700	208,937	0.7
Driver thought police were proper and respectful	22,808,700	899,273	1.1
<b>Street stop</b>	1,433,300	150,720	0.5
Person thought police did not behave properly	351,800	62,186	3.5
Compliant filed			
Yes	10,000	8,183	2.3
No	341,800	61,097	2.6
Person thought police were not respectful	327,700	59,542	3.4
Person thought police were proper and respectful	944,600	115,368	4.1
Arrest or other involuntary contact	3,117,300	249,752	0.7
<b>Other contact</b>	31,981,800	1,100,593	1.2%
Voluntary	24,227,400	932,916	1.3
Traffic accident	5,533,100	363,573	1.0
Anti-crime program participation	2,221,300	200,205	0.6

Note: Detail based on the most recent contact during the past 12 months. Detail may not sum to total due to missing data or categories that are not mutually exclusive. Estimates rounded to the nearest hundred.

~ Not applicable.

! Interpret with caution. Estimate based on 10 or fewer sample cases or the coefficient of variation is greater than 50%.

Source: Bureau of Justice Statistics, National Crime Victimization Survey, Police-Public Contact Survey, 2011.

### APPENDIX TABLE 2

Population of persons age 16 or older and driving population age 16 or older, by demographic characteristics, 2011

Demographic characteristics	Population age 16 or older	Driving population age 16 or older
<b>Total</b>	241,404,142	212,298,850
<b>Sex</b>		
Male	118,267,679	106,632,822
Female	123,136,463	105,666,027
<b>Race/Hispanic origin</b>		
White*	167,364,010	153,358,921
Black/African American*	27,763,474	21,322,976
Hispanic/Latino	31,240,097	25,495,436
American Indian/Alaska Native*	1,058,592	845,043
Asian/Native Hawaiian/other Pacific Islander*	11,447,990	9,168,427
Two or more races*	2,529,979	2,108,046
<b>Age</b>		
16-17	8,060,403	4,323,648
18-24	28,743,383	23,714,718
25-34	41,829,412	38,016,545
35-44	40,680,390	37,756,084
45-54	44,353,446	41,172,146
55-64	37,837,219	34,884,444
65 or older	39,899,889	32,431,265

Note: See appendix table 3 for standard errors.

\*Excludes persons of Hispanic or Latino origin.

Source: Bureau of Justice Statistics, National Crime Victimization Survey, Police-Public Contact Survey, 2011.

**APPENDIX TABLE 3**

**Standard errors for table 1: Involuntary contact with police among persons age 16 or older, by demographic characteristics and type of contact, 2011**

Demographic characteristics	Street stops				Traffic stops			
	Population age 16 or older	Percent of all persons	Percent of stopped persons		Driving population age 16 or older	Percent of all drivers	Percent of stopped drivers	
			Total	Police behaved properly			Total	Police behaved properly
<b>Total</b>	22,320	0.1%	~%	3.9%	1,380,721	0.4%	~%	1.1%
<b>Sex</b>								
Male	1,968,304	0.1%	4.1%	4.6%	1,928,128	0.5%	1.6%	1.4%
Female	1,978,921	0.1	3.9	6.1	1,923,848	0.4	1.6	1.4
<b>Race/Hispanic origin</b>								
White	1,899,202	0.1%	4.1%	4.3%	1,960,731	0.4%	1.6%	1.2%
Black/African American	1,012,560	0.1	2.6	9.8!	862,900	0.9	0.9	2.6
Hispanic/Latino	1,085,620	0.1	2.8	9.0	962,142	0.8	0.9	2.4
American Indian/Alaska Native	124,069	0.6!	0.5	~!	107,481	3.5	0.2	10.5
Asian/Native Hawaiian/other Pacific Islander	582,997	0.2!	1.3	13.0!	505,194	1.1	0.5	3.3
Two or more races	217,923	0.7!	1.3	16.4!	193,506	2.3	0.2	3.8
<b>Age</b>								
16-17	464,692	0.4%	2.1%	11.4%	309,377	1.4%	0.3%	4.0%
18-24	1,033,650	0.2	3.8	6.2	920,877	1.1	1.2	2.1
25-34	1,281,640	0.2	3.6	7.0	1,215,222	0.8	1.2	1.8
35-44	1,262,079	0.1	2.4	8.6	1,210,524	0.7	1.2	1.9
45-54	1,323,296	0.1	2.4	8.8	1,270,498	0.6	1.1	1.9
55-64	1,211,990	0.1	1.7	14.4!	1,157,274	0.6	0.9	2.2
65 or older	1,248,572	0.1	1.7	13.6!	1,109,568	0.5	0.7	2.3

~ Not applicable.

! Interpret with caution. Estimate based on 10 or fewer sample cases or the coefficient of variation is greater than 50%.

Source: Bureau of Justice Statistics, National Crime Victimization Survey, Police-Public Contact Survey, 2011.



**APPENDIX TABLE 4**

**Standard errors for table 2: Perception that reason for traffic stop was legitimate among drivers age 16 or older, by race or Hispanic origin of driver and reason for stop, 2011**

Reason for traffic stop	Percent of stopped drivers				
	All	White	Black/African American	Hispanic/Latino	Other
Any reasons	~%	~%	~%	~%	~%
<b>Police gave reason for the stop</b>					
Speeding	1.6	1.8	3.2	0.5	4.2
Vehicle defect	1.0	1.1	2.4	0.3	2.9
Record check	0.8	0.9	2.1	0.2	2.4
Roadside sobriety check	0.2	0.3	0.3!	0.1!	0.7!
Seatbelt or cell phone violation	0.6	0.7	1.4	0.2	2.1
Illegal turn or lane change	0.7	0.7	1.5	0.2	2.5
Stop sign/light violation	0.6	0.7	1.3	0.2	2.3
Other reason	0.6	0.6	1.3	0.2	1.7
<b>Police did not give reason for the stop</b>	0.4	0.4	1.2	0.1	1.6!

Reason for traffic stop	Percent reporting reason for stop was legitimate				
	All	White	Black/African American	Hispanic/Latino	Other
Any reasons	1.4%	1.4%	3.2%	3.1%	3.8%
<b>Police gave reason for the stop</b>					
Speeding	1.5	1.5	4.4	3.7	4.5
Vehicle defect	2.6	2.7	6.0	6.1	8.2
Record check	3.0	3.5	5.6	8.0	9.4
Roadside sobriety check	6.8	6.4	~!	24.6!	32.5!
Seatbelt or cell phone violation	3.5	3.7	9.9	8.8	12.7!
Illegal turn or lane change	3.8	4.3	9.5	9.0	10.8
Stop sign/light violation	4.0	4.8	10.3	8.4	10.7
Other reason	4.7	5.4	9.0!	9.9	15.0!
<b>Police did not give reason for the stop</b>	5.7	7.2	11.3!	10.6!	17.3!

! Interpret with caution. Estimate based on 10 or fewer cases or the coefficient of variation is greater than 50%.

~ Not applicable.

Source: Bureau of Justice Statistics, National Crime Victimization Survey, Police-Public Contact Survey, 2011.

**APPENDIX TABLE 5**

**Standard errors for table 3: Perception that reason for traffic stop was legitimate among drivers age 16 or older, by reason for stop and whether driver and officer were intra- or interracial, 2011**

Reason for traffic stop	Intracial driver and officer		Interracial driver and officer	
	Total stopped drivers	Reason for stop was legitimate	Total stopped drivers	Reason for stop was legitimate
All reasons	~%	1.5%	~%	2.3%
<b>Police gave reason for the stop</b>				
Speeding	1.9	1.6	2.5	2.6
Vehicle defect	1.1	3.0	1.7	4.4
Record check	0.9	3.9	1.3	5.0
Roadside sobriety check	0.3	7.7	0.2!	25.8!
Seatbelt or cell phone violation	0.7	3.8	1.1	6.5
Illegal turn or lane change	0.8	4.6	1.1	6.6
Stop sign/light violation	0.7	5.0	1.1	6.7
Other reason	0.6	5.9	1.0	7.6
<b>Police did not give reason for the stop</b>	0.4	7.9	0.7	9.9

~ Not applicable.

! Interpret with caution. Estimate based on 10 or fewer sample cases or the coefficient of variation is greater than 50%.

Source: Bureau of Justice Statistics, National Crime Victimization Survey, Police-Public Contact Survey, 2011.

**APPENDIX TABLE 6**

**Standard errors for table 4: Perception that reason for traffic stop was legitimate among drivers age 16 or older, by race and ethnicity of driver and officer and driver's perception that police behaved properly, 2011**

Race and ethnicity of driver and officer	Percent of all drivers	Percent of stopped drivers			
		Total	Reason for stop was legitimate	Police behaved properly	
				Reason for stop was legitimate	Reason for stop was not legitimate
<b>Total</b>	0.4%	~%	1.4%	0.9%	2.7%
<b>White driver</b>	0.4%	~%	1.4%	1.0%	3.4%
White officer	0.4	1.5	1.5	1.1	3.6
Black/African American officer	0.1	0.6	4.6	2.4	12.2
Hispanic/Latino officer	0.1	0.5	5.6	2.1	11.9
<b>Black/African American driver</b>	0.9%	~%	3.2%	1.9%	5.1%
White officer	0.7	3.2	3.7	2.3	6.3
Black/African American officer	0.3	2.1	6.8	4.8	8.6
Hispanic/Latino officer	0.2	1.3	10.8	~	14.4!
<b>Hispanic/Latino driver</b>	0.8%	~%	3.0%	1.8%	5.6%
White officer	0.6	3.3	3.6	2.2	6.7
Black/African American officer	0.1	1.0	12.7	7.8!	26.0!
Hispanic/Latino officer	0.3	2.3	5.8	3.8	13.2
<b>Other driver</b>	1.0%	~%	3.8%	2.8%	7.0%
White officer	0.9	4.1	4.1	2.9	8.9!
Black/African American officer	0.1!	1.3!	20.3!	27.5!	23.6!
Hispanic/Latino officer	0.2!	1.8!	12.9!	~!	~!

~ Not applicable.

! Interpret with caution. Estimate based on 10 or fewer sample cases or the coefficient of variation was greater than 50%.

Source: Bureau of Justice Statistics, National Crime Victimization Survey, Police-Public Contact Survey, 2011.

**APPENDIX TABLE 7**

**Standard errors for table 5: Enforcement actions taken by police against drivers age 16 or older, by driver’s demographic characteristics and perception that police behaved properly, 2011**

Race of driver	Ticketed			Warned			Allowed to proceed with no enforcement action		
	Percent of all drivers	Percent of stopped drivers		Percent of all drivers	Percent of stopped drivers		Percent of all drivers	Percent of stopped drivers	
		Ticketed drivers	Police behaved properly		Warned drivers	Police behaved properly		Drivers with no enforcement	Police behaved properly
All drivers	0.3%	~%	1.5%	0.2%	~%	1.2%	0.1%	~%	2.5%
<b>Sex</b>									
Male	0.4%	2.0%	1.8%	0.3%	2.4%	1.6%	0.2%	3.2%	3.2%
Female	0.3	2.0	1.9	0.2	2.3	1.5	0.1	3.1	3.0
<b>Race/Hispanic origin</b>									
White	0.3%	2.0%	1.6%	0.2%	2.1%	1.3%	0.1%	3.0%	2.8%
Black/African American	0.7	1.2	3.4	0.4	1.2	3.7	0.3	2.1	5.7
Hispanic/Latino	0.6	1.2	2.9	0.4	1.2	3.2	0.2	1.8	6.8
Other	0.8	0.9	3.4	0.4	0.7	3.7	0.3	1.2	8.2
<b>Age</b>									
16–17	0.9%	0.3%	6.8%	0.9%	0.6%	4.7%	0.4%!	0.6%	~%!
18–24	0.8	1.5	2.7	0.5	1.6	2.6	0.4	2.5	5.1
25–34	0.6	1.6	2.4	0.4	1.8	1.9	0.2	2.2	5.1
35–44	0.5	1.5	2.5	0.4	1.7	2.3	0.2	2.2	5.3
45–54	0.4	1.4	2.5	0.3	1.6	2.5	0.2	2.4	4.5
55–64	0.4	1.1	2.9	0.3	1.3	2.5	0.2	2.0	4.8
65 or older	0.3	0.7	3.6	0.3	1.1	2.5	0.2	1.6	5.1

~ Not applicable.

! Interpret with caution. Estimate based on 10 or fewer sample cases or the coefficient of variation is greater than 50%.

Source: Bureau of Justice Statistics, National Crime Victimization Survey, Police-Public Contact Survey, 2011.

**APPENDIX TABLE 8**

**Standard errors for table 6: Stopped drivers age 16 or older who were ticketed, by race of officer and driver and driver’s perception that police behaved properly, 2011**

Race of driver and officer	Percent of all drivers issued a ticket	Percent of stopped drivers		
		Ticketed	Police behaved properly	
			Ticketed drivers	Drivers not ticketed
<b>White driver</b>	0.3%	1.8%	1.6%	1.4%
White officer	0.2	2.0	1.7	1.5
Black/African American officer	0.0	5.7	4.9	3.3
Hispanic/Latino officer	0.0	6.5	5.7	5.0
<b>Black/African American driver</b>	0.7%	3.3%	3.4%	3.4%
White officer	0.5	3.9	4.0	3.8
Black/African American officer	0.2	7.1	5.7	6.1
Hispanic/Latino officer	0.1	10.8	12.7!	12.7!
<b>Hispanic/Latino driver</b>	0.6%	3.3%	2.9%	3.4%
White officer	0.4	3.9	3.6	3.7
Black/African American officer	0.1!	14.3!	10.6!	16.3!
Hispanic/Latino officer	0.2	6.8	5.6	8.3
<b>Other driver</b>	0.8%	4.3%	3.4%	4.3%
White officer	0.7	4.9	3.8	4.8
Black/African American officer	0.1	12.8	21.1!	~!
Hispanic/Latino officer	0.2!	~!	~!	~!

~ Not applicable.

! Interpret with caution. Estimate based on 10 or fewer sample cases or the coefficient of variation is greater than 50%.

Source: Bureau of Justice Statistics, National Crime Victimization Survey, Police-Public Contact Survey, 2011.

**APPENDIX TABLE 9**

**Standard errors for table 7: Stopped drivers who were searched by police, by driver’s demographic characteristics and perception that police behaved properly, 2011**

Demographic characteristics	Percent of all drivers searched by police	Percent of stopped drivers		
		Searched	Police behaved properly	
			Searched drivers	Drivers not searched
Total	0.4%	~%	5.8%	1.2%
<b>Sex</b>				
Male	0.6%	4.8%	6.5%	1.4%
Female	0.5	4.5	10.6	1.4
<b>Race/Hispanic origin</b>				
White	0.4%	5.5%	7.9%	1.2%
Black/African American	1.4	4.4	10.9	2.8
Hispanic/Latino	1.4	4.4	10.7	2.5
Other	1.6	2.6	18.4!	2.8
<b>Age</b>				
16–17	1.5% !	0.8% !	~% !	3.9%
18–34	0.7	5.5	7.3	1.6
35–54	0.6	5.1	8.7	1.6
55 or older	0.5	2.6	18.6!	1.8

~ Not applicable.

! Interpret with caution. Estimate based on 10 or fewer sample cases or the coefficient of variation is greater than 50%.

Source: Bureau of Justice Statistics, National Crime Victimization Survey, Police-Public Contact Survey, 2011.

**APPENDIX TABLE 10**

**Standard errors for table 8: Stopped drivers age 16 or older who had their person or vehicle searched by police, by driver’s perception that police behaved properly, 2011**

Stop characteristics	Percent of stopped drivers	
	Total	Police behaved properly
All stops	~%	1.1%
<b>Police searched driver or vehicle</b>		
No	0.7%	1.1%
Yes	0.4	5.4
	Percent of searched drivers	
<b>Police asked permission to search</b>		
No	5.3%	8.0%
Yes	5.4	6.2
<b>Driver thought search was legitimate</b>		
No	5.4%	6.7%
Yes	5.3	5.8

~ Not applicable.

Source: Bureau of Justice Statistics, National Crime Victimization Survey, Police-Public Contact Survey, 2011.

**APPENDIX TABLE 11**

**Standard errors for table 9: Type of force used or threatened by police against stopped drivers, by driver’s perception that police behaved properly, 2011**

Type of force	Percent of stopped drivers	
	Total	Police behaved properly
All stops	~%	1.1%
<b>Force used</b>		
Shouting or cursing	0.2%	6.8% !
Verbal threats	0.4	5.6
Physical force	0.3	7.7
	Percent of drivers who experienced force	
<b>Driver thought use of force was necessary</b>		
No	3.9%	4.7%
Yes	3.2	6.6
<b>Driver thought use of force was excessive</b>		
No	4.2%	4.9%
Yes	4.0	4.2 !

~ Not applicable.

! Interpret with caution. Estimate based on 10 or fewer sample cases or the coefficient of variation is greater than 50%.

Source: Bureau of Justice Statistics, National Crime Victimization Survey, Police-Public Contact Survey, 2011.

## APPENDIX TABLE 12

### Standard errors for table 10: Reason for street stops involving persons age 16 or older, by perceptions that stop was legitimate and police behaved properly, 2011

Reason for street stop	Percent of all persons in a street stop	Percent of stopped persons		
		Total	Reason for stop was legitimate	Police behaved properly
Any reasons	0.1%	~%	4.1%	3.9%
Suspected of something or matched description of someone police were looking for	0.0	4.1	6.0	5.8
Police were seeking information about another person or investigating a crime	0.0	2.8	5.1	5.7
Police were providing a service	~	1.9	7.8	5.3
No reason given by police	0.0	2.9	8.1!	9.0
Unknown	0.0	3.2	7.7	7.6

~ Not applicable.

! Interpret with caution. Estimate based on 10 or fewer sample cases or the coefficient of variation is greater than 50%.

Source: Bureau of Justice Statistics, National Crime Victimization Survey, Police-Public Contact Survey, 2011.

## APPENDIX TABLE 13

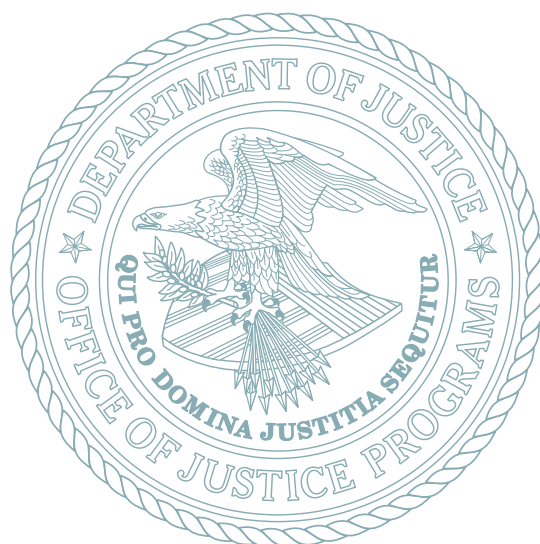
### Standard errors for table 11: Characteristics of persons age 16 or older involved in street stops and outcomes of the stop, by perceptions that police behaved properly, 2011

Stop characteristics	Percent of stopped persons	
	Total	Police behaved properly
All stops	~%	3.9%
Person thought officer and respondent were the same race or Hispanic origin		
No	3.4%	7.7%
Yes	4.2	4.5
Unknown	3.4	7.7
Person thought reason for stop was legitimate		
No	4.0%	6.2%
Yes	4.1	3.2
Searched or frisked		
No	3.6%	4.0%
Yes	3.1	8.4
Person thought search was legitimate		
No	5.0%	9.6%
Yes	4.3	8.2
Force used		
No	3.8%	3.6%
Yes	3.5	6.7
Person thought force was excessive		
No	5.4%	8.7%
Yes	3.5	0.0!

~ Not applicable.

! Interpret with caution. Estimate based on 10 or fewer sample cases or the coefficient of variation is greater than 50%.

Source: Bureau of Justice Statistics, National Crime Victimization Survey, Police-Public Contact Survey, 2011.



The Bureau of Justice Statistics, located in the Office of Justice Programs, U.S. Department of Justice, collects, analyses, and disseminates statistical information on crime, criminal offenders, victims of crime, and the operation of justice systems at all levels of government. William J. Sabol is acting director.

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